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NOFORN

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/TIA/ITA, DS/IP/EAP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/24/2019

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: CANBERRA - SECURITY ENVIRONMENT PROFILE
QUESTIONNAIRE (SEPQ) SPRING 2009

REF: STATE 13023

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires a.i. Daniel Clune for reason 1.4(D) and (G).

¶1. (U) This response has been coordinated and cleared by the EAC. The following responses are keyed to the questions listed in the refel and cover all constituent posts in Australia.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE

I.(SBU) Demonstrations

¶A. Yes. There are significant Greek, Malaysian, Lebanese, Serbian, Indonesian and Pakistani communities and there are growing Ethiopian, Somali, and Sudanese communities in Sydney and Melbourne. Both of those capital cities have seen demonstrations numbering 10,000 to 15,000 during the 2006 Israel-Lebanon conflict. Should an issue providing sufficient motivation arise, these communities would be capable of mounting very large scale anti-U.S. demonstrations.

i. Yes- The majority of the anti-American demonstrations occur near US facilities. Within the last 12 months, there has only been one known protest away from US facilities in which protesters chained themselves to military vehicles preparing to participate in the joint Department of Defense/Australian Defense Force exercise "Talisman Saber".

ii. Yes-Canberra:

February 24, 2008 Pro-Serbian demonstration with approximately 70 protesters;
July 4, 2008 Amnesty International demonstrators with approximately 12 protesters;
January 10, 2009 pro-Palestinian demonstration with 300 protesters.
Sydney:
January 1, 2008 Amnesty International-300 protesters;
March 8, 2008 Kosovo Independence rally-2000 protesters,
November 11, 2008 Stop the War coalition-12 protesters,
November 16, 2008 Syria(after US Airstrike)-20 protesters,
December 19, 2008 End Iraq War-30 protesters,
December 27, 2008 End Iraq and Afghanistan-40 protesters,
December 29, 2008 Gaza Strip-1500 protesters,
January 3, 2009 Gaza Strip-50 protesters
January 4, 2009 Gaza Strip-15 protesters
January 9, 2009 Gaza Strip-30 protesters
January 15, 2009 Gaza Strip-12 protesters
January 28, 2009 Sri Lankans-50 protesters
January 29, 2009 Sri Lankans-50 protesters
January 30, 2009 Sri Lankans-50 protesters
January 31, 2009 Sri Lankans-50 protesters

February 4, 2009 Sri Lankans-5000 protesters
February 21, 2009 Kosovo-125 protesters
Melbourne:
February 18, 2008 Anti-Kosovo Independence- 200 protesters
February 22, 2008 Anti-Kosovo Independence-38 protesters
November 5, 2008 Pro-Cuba-13 protesters
January 9, 2009 Anti-war-15 protesters

Perth:
July 25, 2008 Save our Senate/No War/ Socialist Alliance-12 protesters in conjunction with a Secretary of State visit.
September 12, 2008 No war/Socialist Alliance-13 protesters
October 29, 2008 Australia/Cuba Friendship Society-13 protesters
January 22, 2009 Friends of Palestine-50 protesters

iii. For Canberra 100 to 500
For Sydney 450 to 500
For Melbourne 100 to 200
For Perth 50 or less

iv. Anti-American demonstrations are usually triggered by U.S. foreign policy initiatives and military actions.

1B. Generally peaceful

i. No. However anti-Kosovo independence protesters damaged the building where the US Consulate Melbourne is located, by throwing objects and launching a flare at the front window of the building. Also, protesters marching on their way to the US Consulate Melbourne burned a Victoria State Police vehicle.

ii. No.

1C. Yes. Various groups to include farmers, blue-collar workers, Indigenous Australians and other issue motivated groups have demonstrated against the Government of Australia. The typical issues are environmental concerns and Indigenous rights issues.

i. Yes. The US Embassy Canberra is located very near the legislative buildings in Canberra. Protests often will begin at one location and end near the US Embassy or one of the other missions located nearby.

ii. Issue dependent. Generally hundreds, occasionally in the thousands.

iii. While generally peaceful, Australian law enforcement authorities have noted that issue motivated groups (IMGs) with anti-war, anti-globalization or environmental protection agendas have become more organized and more prone to engage in demonstration tactics that have led to some violence since late 2006.

II. (SBU) Macro Conflict Conditions

1A. No/No

1B. N/A

1C. N/A

1D. N/A

III. (S/NF) Host Country Capabilities

1A. Yes. Commensurate with the United States.

1B. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and Drug Enforcement Administration have provided training to some Australian law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the Australian Federal Police has requested "High Threat PRS training for their Close Personal Protection teams. Post Regional Security Officer(RSO)is coordinating with Diplomatic Security to arrange for this type training in the future. The effectiveness of training received is considered highly effective.

¶C. No

¶D. Yes. The GoA intelligence services have thwarted three terrorist plots(Benbrika-Al Qaeda, Jack Roach-Jama'ah Islamiyah, Willie Bridgette-Lashkar-e-Tayyiba) that were in the late planning stages.

¶E. Yes, however privacy laws in Australia restrict the sharing of information between law enforcement agencies.

¶F. Yes, the Australian Security Intelligence Organization (ASIO) and host country law enforcement agencies have disrupted at least two potentially lethal terrorist plots within the past two years.

¶G. Yes

¶H. Very good

¶I. Effective

¶J. Effective

INDIGENOUS TERRORISM

¶I. (S/NF) Anti-American Terrorist Groups

¶A. None to date; nevertheless, there have been incidents of extremists with an anti-western agenda coalescing into cells that intended to strike Australian interests. Such cells could just as easily decide to attack U.S. interests, but there are no indications that any such cells currently exist. Australian authorities also have noted that acts of violence by unaffiliated or disaffected individuals are possible and could occur with little, if any, prior warning. The solitary nature with which such incidents can be planned and carried out would make detection difficult. It is also worth mentioning that although only anecdotal evidence exists, there are indications that incarcerated indigenous persons are adopting a brand of radical Islam while imprisoned. To date there is no evidence that once released from incarceration these groups continue following these beliefs, indicating it may be a method of obtaining favors while incarcerated.

¶B. No.

¶C. No.

¶D. No.

¶E. No.

¶F. N/A.

¶G. N/A.

II. (SBU) Other Indigenous Terrorist Groups

¶A. No

¶B. N/A

¶C. N/A

¶D. N/A

TRANSNATIONAL TERRORISM

¶I. (S/NF) Transnational Terrorist Indicators

¶A. Yes: Hezbollah, Jama'ah Islamiyah (JI), Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LET), Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE) and assorted Sunni, Shiite, and extremist fringe groups.

¶B. Presence of all these groups is primarily for support, finance, and propaganda activity.

¶C. No.

¶D. Yes, Tamil Non-governmental organizations(NGO) and other Islamic Charities.

¶E. Yes, There are ethnic and religious groups in Australia that are generally well assimilated, of which some members are believed to be sympathetic to international terrorist groups and their ideologies and actions. However, Post notes there are some groups that are not well assimilated which increases their sympathies for these extremist organizations.

These groups, normally the older generations, who in turn nurture extremism in the youth, feel more ties to their country of origin than to Australia and perceive racism and stigmatization from the Australian government and general public, thus making them sympathetic to anti-Western

ideologies. In most instances, Post does not believe these groups would take up arms for this cause, but would not necessarily condemn those who would.

¶F. EAC assesses the level, intent, and scope of hostile intelligence services in country as low. Several hostile intelligence services are known or suspected to have undeclared officers in Australia, including services from Russia, China, and Iran. There are no current indications that these services pose a direct threat to U.S. persons, facilities or interests. The capabilities of Australia's security, intelligence and law enforcement services are such that any third country service seeking to do harm to U.S. interests almost certainly would consider Australia an extremely difficult operational environment and focus its resources elsewhere. Moreover, Australian authorities would notify the Mission of any such threat coming to their attention, allowing for prompt employment of appropriate countermeasures.

¶G. Both weapons and explosives are available, though explosives are more readily obtained. Australia has strict gun control laws, though there is a black market for firearms. Explosives of the type to make relatively unsophisticated but effective bombs are quite readily available, due to large agricultural and mining sectors.